

REMARKS

I. Preliminary Remarks

Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim certain aspects of applicant's invention. Claims 13-16 have been added. Claims 1-4 and 13-16 are pending. The two inventors named in this application are co-inventors of claims 1-4. Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under Section 102(b) and 103(a) based on Schroeder International Application No. PCT/US00/09916. According to the Examiner, Schroeder discloses compression molded resin (25-85%) and a catalyst (1-5%), milled glass fiber, fine wood flour, course wood and few other ingredients, which obviate or anticipate the claimed invention. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The claimed invention provides wood additive thermoset composite (WATC) to mold a final product that combines the favorable qualities of both wood and thermosetting resin. That is, this invention combines the favorable dampening characteristics of wood with favorable stiffness of thermoset plastic. Increasing the wood content in the WATC improves its damping characteristics, but this would generally weaken its stiffness and lower its viscosity. On the other hand, lowering the wood content in the WATC weakens its damping characteristics, but improves its stiffness and moldability. Wood may be measured in "mesh" amounts in 20 mesh, 40 mesh, and 60 mesh. See paragraph 28 of the specification. To balance the desired dampening and stiffness characteristics for a speaker cabinet, independent claim 1 as amended recites WATC having "at least about 50% of wood material having a mesh amount between about 20 and about 60 present by weight of the composite; and at least one thermosetting resin material present substantially accounting for the remaining weight of the composite."

In contrast, Schroeder teaches using 10% to 40% by weight course wood having a mesh size between 10 and 50. See Page 12 lines 30-33 of the PCT/US00/09916 Application. Schroeder does not teach or suggest using at least about 50% of course wood as claimed in this application. With less course wood content in Schroeder, there is less desirable dampening

characteristics in speaker cabinet for example. Due to this difference, method of molding the claimed invention vs. Schroeder's material is different in terms of pressure and heat applied to mold a cabinet for example. Therefore, Schroeder does not anticipate nor obviate the amended claim 1 and its dependent claims. And for the similar reasons, new claims 13-16 are also allowable over Schroeder.

III. Conclusion

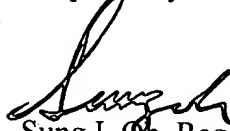
Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with marking to show changes made."

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the application patentably distinguish over Schroeder and are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's undersigned representative at (213) 689-5176 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1853. Should such additional fees be associated with an extension of time, applicant respectfully requests that this paper be considered a petition therefore.

Respectfully submitted,


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VERSION WITH MARKING TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) A wood additive thermoset composite comprising:
at least about 50% of wood material having a mesh amount between about 20 and about 60 present by weight of the composite; and
at least one thermosetting resin material present substantially accounting for the remaining weight of the composite.